



WATER AND SEDIMENT QUALITY SUBCOMMITTEE GALVESTON BAY COUNCIL



A PROGRAM OF TCEQ

Meeting Minutes Wednesday, September 8, 2021 1:30PM – 3:30PM

Subcommittee Chair: Brian Koch, Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB)

Subcommittee Vice Chair: Justin Bower, Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC)

GBEP Representative: Christian N. Rines

Call to Order

Attendees: Brian Koch (TSSWCB), Justin Bower (H-GAC), Christian Rines (GBEP), Rachel Windham (H-GAC), Stephanie Glenn (HARC), Bryan Eastham (TPWD), Christie Taylor (TX A&M AgriLife), Elizabeth Kompanik (TCEQ), Laura Ryckman (TCEQ), Zulimar Lucena (USGS), Linda Shead (Texas Coastal Partners), Mac Martin (TFS), Steven Johnston (H-GAC), Cynthia Clevenger (GBEP), Lisa Marshall (GBEP), Kristen McGovern (GBEP), Lindsey Lippert (GBEP), Wendy Forester (GBEP), Kerry Niemann (TCEQ), Rose Esteves (HPARD), Charlotte Cisneros (GBF), Kelli Ondracek (HPARD), Kendall Guidroz (H-GAC), Cassidy Kempf (HPARD), Ray Ram (PVAMU), Jason Pinchback (GLO), Kimber De Salvo Anderson (TIRN), Jazmyn Milford (TCEQ).

Approval of the September 8, 2021 minutes – Ms. Rines opened the meeting with approval of the minutes. A motion was requested for approval. Ms. Glenn motioned to approve the minutes and Mr. Koch seconded the motion. The minutes were approved with no changes.

A Conflict-of-Interest statement was displayed at the start of the meeting. Subcommittee members were asked to acknowledge the statement and disclose any interest with a proposed project prior to or during the project nomination discussion. All possible conflicts of interest were captured in the meeting's recording and chat feature.

New Business

FY 23 Project Proposals and Discussion

Project proposals were sent out in advance of the meeting for review. Members were asked to keep the subcommittee priorities in mind while reviewing.

The priorities selected by the WSQ Subcommittee for the FY23 finding cycle were:

- Supporting management measures and watershed-based plans
- Soil health studies, workshops, and green infrastructure

- Targeted/Direct Monitoring

Each person presenting a proposal was given a total of 5 minutes to explain their project followed by a few minutes for Q&A. Guidelines for presenting proposals were as follows:

- Due to time constraints, presentations were limited to a few slides;
- Proposals were presented in the order of the distributed project proposal packet;
- If a connection to a proposal was not obvious, the relationship to the project was disclosed; and,
- If a vote was necessary, only one person from each entity could vote and represent their entity.

Once all proposals had been presented to the group, the subcommittee discussed which projects should take priority. A consensus-based decision was made to recommend four projects for FY23 funding to the Budget and Priorities (B&P) Subcommittee, including a previous commitment to support the remaining funding needed to complete part two of H-GAC's *Supporting the Use of Green Infrastructure in the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed* project, with a fifth recommendation as an alternate if any funds remain. Projects selected by the B&P Subcommittee would be presented to the GBC at the November council meeting for approval. The following project proposals were recommended by WSQ subcommittee members:

Project Name	Grantee	Total Request	Year 1 (FY23)	Year 2 (FY24)	Final Recommendation
Watershed Protection Plan Development for Clear Creek	H-GAC	\$30,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$30,000
Supporting the Use of Green Infrastructure in the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed - Part Two	H-GAC	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$0	\$15,000
Targeted Bacteria Monitoring (Phase III)	H-GAC	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$0	\$40,000
HPARD Water Management Plan	HPARD	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$0	\$50,000
Promoting Healthy Soils and Green Infrastructure for Improved Water Quality in the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed	TX A&M AgriLife	\$92,309	\$49,286	\$43,023	\$40,000
WSQ Totals					\$175,000

****All projects highlighted in green have been nominated to be fully funded for the requested amounts. If additional funding does become available, the recommendation is to put the remainder of that money towards supporting one year of funding for "Promoting Healthy Soils and Green Infrastructure for Improved Water Quality in the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed", with the understanding that changes to the project will be made to better link the soil health***

workshops and the work being done at Exploration Green to make for a more cohesive project. The project has requested a minimum of \$40,000 to complete the first year of work.

Old Business

Project Updates from WSQ Project Mangers:

- Implementation of Watershed Protection Plan for Double Bayou (HARC) – Ms. Glenn announced that the GBEP portion of the project is complete. Efforts will continue under current TSSWCB funding into the next year. The GBEP final report highlighted the project from the initial characterization study through the Watershed Protection Plan and its implementation. The project truly is a success story for what these plans can do for the Galveston Bay Watershed or any watershed. USGS continues water quality monitoring in the watershed, and the local Sheriff's Department has also continued with its feral hog removal efforts. In addition, the contract has been renewed for the SWCD technician, Jimmy Weaver.
- Targeted Bacteria Monitoring (BPA thru H-GAC) – Ms. Guidroz announced that they have completed monitoring for the time being and have processed all associated data. The team is currently reviewing draft reports that the SCA interns had put together. Once those reports are finalized, they will be sent to the appropriate jurisdictions.
- Occurrence of Microplastics in Tributaries to Galveston Bay (USGS) – Ms. Lucena announced that sample collection is complete, and the first batch of samples have been submitted to the lab for analysis. A second batch of samples will be submitted later this month. To date, no results have been received from the lab.
- Baseline Assessment of Microplastics in Galveston Bay (USGS) – Ms. Lucena announced that USGS has started sampling this summer and will ramp up sampling for the next six months. Phase II samples will be sent to the lab once Phase I have been processed.
- Outreach Implementation for Galveston Bay Water Quality Projects (H-GAC) – Ms. Guidroz announced that the team is currently reaching out to all of non-MS4s listed in the project and scheduling one-on-one meetings with each of them. The first meeting was held this morning to try and identify what additional resources would be most helpful for their community. H-GAC will soon start working on the CBSM pilot project portion of the project
- Dickinson Bayou/Highland Bayou Watershed Protection Plan (WPP) (TCWP) –No Dickinson Bayou update. Ms. Rines reminded subcommittee members that the Highland Bayou Coastal Basin WPP was accepted by the EPA on May 12, 2021.
- Cypress Creek, Spring Creek, and Clear Creek WPPs (H-GAC) – Ms. Windham announced that the Cypress Creek WPP has been approved by the EPA, so the team should have an Executive Summary out very soon for that project which is still being drafted. The Spring Creek WPP has been sent off to TCEQ for its first round of edits. It has since been received back and the team was also able to incorporate some of the stakeholder edits. The document is currently with the TCEQ and will either be sent back for additional edits or go to the EPA for final approval. The Clear Creek project is just starting up. The team is reaching out to its partners in the watershed and making those connections before starting any meetings or official analyses.

- BIG I-Plan/Basins 11/Cotton Bayou (H-GAC)/ – Cotton Bayou: Ms. Windham announced that the team was recently part of a clean water initiative workshop where implementation strategies were discussed. The project was highlighted during a breakout session at the end of the workshop. The technical support document has been developed; however, the team is working to improve upon flow calculations based on improved methodologies. BIG I-Plan: The Implementation Plan is currently being revised. It has been almost 10 years since the original plan was put in place. The BIG is also working on its annual report, which will cover implementation projects from 2020. Mr. Johnston asked anyone wanting to be highlighted in this year's report, to please contact him on their project or water quality improvement story. Basin 11: The team is currently working on closing TMDLs in Oyster Creek, Chocolate Bayou, Halls Bayou, and Mustang Bayou and getting final TCEQ/EPA approval. The team is also working on Implementation Plans for these projects as well.

Watershed Partnership Updates/Roundtable:

- Mr. Johnston announced that the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service is hosting the Southeast Texas Ag Summit September 30th- October 1st. Visit [TX.AG/SETXAGSUMMIT2021](https://www.txag.org/setxagsummit2021) to register.
- Mr. Bower announced that H-GAC is currently involved in a conservation project aimed at building capacity with member governments and supporting conservation work in natural and built environments through grant matchmaking, proposal development, data analyses, etc. The team would love the opportunity to talk with your organizations about 1) what you're already doing in the area, especially as it may relate to local government involvement, 2) what you have planned for conservation/GI/etc. projects, or what are wish listed, and 3) how they can support you. Contact [Justin Bower](#) for more information.
- Mr. Koch announced that the TSSWCB is requesting proposals for the FY2022 CWA §319(h) grant cycle. Submissions are due September 24, 2021. To obtain a complete copy of the TSSWCB's request for proposals and proposal submission packet, please visit: <https://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/programs/texas-nonpoint-source-management-program>.
- Ms. Shead announced that the Bayou Preservation Association is hosting their 18th Annual Symposium — *Green, in a Word, Is Good* on Wednesday, October 6th and Thursday, October 7th. This year's event will be held virtually via Zoom. More information can be found at the [Bayou Preservation Association Website](#).

Galveston Bay Estuary Program, council, and subcommittee updates:

- Ms. Rines reminded everyone that National Estuaries Week is September 18th-25th. Details on how you can show your support for Galveston Bay will be provided in a follow-up email.

Upcoming GBEP meetings:

- PPE Subcommittee Meeting – September 9, 2021 (10:00am-12:00pm)
- NRU Subcommittee Meeting – September 14, 2021 (9:30am-11:30am)
- B&P Subcommittee Meeting – October 5, 2021 (9:00am-11:00am)
- GBC Meeting – November 3, 2021 (9:30pm-12:30pm)
- Next M&R Subcommittee Meeting – December 8, 2021 (9:30am-11:30am)

- Next WSQ Subcommittee Meeting – December 8, 2021 (1:30pm-3:30pm)

Adjourn